

08-07-1985-p.2

\*\*\*\*Working on behalf of Carbondale's Past, Present and Future\*\*\*\*

## Carbondale Historical Society and Museum, Inc.

Post Office Box 151, Carbondale, PA 18407  
(The CHS&M, INC. is a 501(C)3 Corporation)

## NEWSLETTER

Volume I, Number 5

August 8, 1985

Dear Member:

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As always, the Society would not be able to accomplish all that it does without the constant encouragement and support of the membership. For having helped as you have, we are very grateful.

The Executive Committee

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3. In early November 1984, the President of the Historical Society, together with Robert Davis (Carbondale City Manager), Steven Smith (Visqueen), Michael Fomous (Gentex), Justus Hart (Chesapeake Corporation), Richard Kane (Kane Warehousing), testified at a public hearing in favor of the creation of a Lackawanna County Railroad Authority. Such

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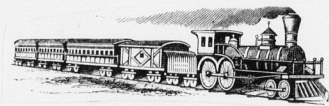
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A Summary History of the Lackawanna Valley Railroad and Its Predecessors.

By Robert J. Tomaine

The railroad line through the Lackawanna Valley from Carbondale to Scranton had its origins in 1843, when the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company undertook to extend operations on its coal-hauling gravity railroad to Archbald, seven miles distant from what was then the beginning of the line in Carbondale. Concurrent with this extension work, the line was also being rebuilt in the opposite direction toward Honesdale and the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company's Canal.

James Archbald, under whose supervision the work on both the extension and the rebuilding was carried out, laid out the lines south of Carbondale under the same concept as had been used on other parts of the system. This involved the use of two separate tracks, one being for the loaded cars carrying anthracite coal toward the terminus of the canal at Honesdale, and the other for the return of the empty cars to the mines.

With the extension completed, the loaded track began at the base of No. 5 Hill in Archbald. Two steam-powered inclined planes were employed to pull the cars up to the summit of the mountain, from which they would then coast the entire distance to Carbondale. From there, they would travel over more planes and a number of levels to Honesdale.

The return track to Archbald began at a point in Carbondale known as the "switchback," where cars returning from Honesdale would be switched over to the newly constructed "back plane," built expressly for the purpose of providing a starting elevation for the cars to coast to Archbald. As on the other sections of the line, no locomotives were used.

Shortly after this expansion, the D&HCCo. first experienced major opposition to its expansion plans, with a sentiment in existence in the Lackawanna Valley that a locomotive line should be constructed to a connection with the New York and Erie Railroad at Lanesboro, PA. One explanation for such hostility in the region may lie in the fact that, at the time, the D&H's gravity system was not open to the general public as a common

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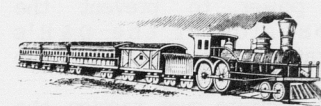
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